

Census Bureau Partnership with United States Postal Service

National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic, and Other Populations
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Discussant

Benefits of Partnership with USPS

- ❖ Long history of Census-USPS partnership
 - ❖ Working together since first mail-out, mail-back
- ❖ MAF Updates
 - ❖ Twice-yearly use of Delivery Sequence File
- ❖ Cost savings accrue to USPS
 - ❖ 2010: \$12m savings because of undeliverable mail destruction

Concerns about Using USPS Staff as Enumerators

Cost concerns

- Difference in pay scale
- Potential overtime

Note that 2010 Census required 45 million staff hours to contact non-respondents. The 1990 Census required 36 million staff hours to contact non-respondents. At that time, if the work was covered by USPS, every letter carrier would have had to work 20 hours of overtime every week for five weeks.

Concerns about Using USPS Staff as Enumerators

Efficacy concerns

- Urban areas: Apartments, housing instability
- Suburban areas: Cluster boxes
- Rural: Distant mailboxes, post office boxes

Remember that mail carriers may know where the homes are, but don't always know where people live.



Concerns about Using USPS Staff as Enumerators

Privacy concerns

- Intimacy of information shared
- Negative implications for USPS, Census
- Fear of repercussions, including religious exemptions

Consider confidentiality concerns raised yesterday and political context (currently and in 2020).



Questions to Spur Discussion

- How do you plan to counter the privacy concerns of having postal carriers functioning as enumerators?
- Will postal carriers be used as enumerators in communities that have few postal routes? For example, in rural communities where all mail is delivered to a centralized location?